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# AUTHORIZATION REQUESTS FOR COMBATANT SHIPS

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## COMMUNICATION

FROM

## THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

TRANSMITTING

A REPORT ON THE SURVIVABILITY, COST-EFFECTIVENESS, AND COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS OF SIX SHIPS FOR COMBATANT FORCES, AUTHORIZATION REQUESTS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS WHETHER EACH SHIP SHOULD BE NUCLEAR OR CONVENTIONALLY POWERED, PURSUANT TO 10 U.S.C. 7310(b)

AUGUST 15, 1986.—Referred to the Committee on Armed Services and ordered to be printed

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THE WHITE HOUSE,
*Washington, August 15, 1986.*

Hon. THOMAS P. O'NEILL, Jr.,
*Speaker of the House of Representatives,*
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This letter is submitted in compliance with Section 7310(b) of Title 10, United States Code. That section requires me to provide the Congress with my conclusions with respect to the survivability, cost-effectiveness, and combat effectiveness of any new ship requested for the combatant forces; a recommendation whether the ship should be nuclear or conventionally powered; and the reasons for my conclusions and recommendations. Authorization is being requested for Fiscal Years 1987 and 1988 for the ships listed in the attachment to this letter. All of these ships are considered to be combat effective. Because ships last 25 to 30 years or more, their effectiveness will be enhanced in the future as new equipment is added. Combat effectiveness is judged in terms of the ability of each ship to accomplish the mission for which it was designed. In all cases, these ships provide more capability than the ships of comparable type of class that are scheduled to be retired as the new ones are delivered.

The ships are considered to be cost-effective in relation to the various missions they are to perform. In determining cost-effectiveness, consideration is given to several factors, including alternative power systems and alternative weapon systems that may be used to accomplish the missions of the ship and the fact that it is difficult to prorate the total cost of a ship among all of the missions it is designed to perform. Cost-effectiveness is considered acceptable for the continuing programs requested for Fiscal Years 1987 and 1988 because the ships can accomplish their primary missions and because nonrecurring costs have been incurred and production is underway. The LSD-41 Cargo Variant is the only new ship class not included in previous authorizations. It will be a modified version of the LSD-41 amphibious ship design with greater cargo capacity than the LSD-41. Six LSD-41 class ships have previously been authorized.

Conventionally powered propulsion systems are planned for the AEGIS Cruiser (CG-47), the DDG-51 Destroyer, the LSD-41 Cargo Variant, and the LDH-1 Class Amphibious Assault Ship since these systems are adequate for these ships to accomplish their missions and have lower procurement costs. Nuclear power is proposed for the TRIDENT and SSN-688 submarines. In view of higher investment costs of nuclear-powered ships, I believe that nuclear power should be limited to those ships for which clear benefits are derived. Compared to the missions of surface ships, submarine missions provide a much greater opportunity to capitalize on the benefits of nuclear power. In addition, it would not be cost-effective to

alter either the TRIDENT or attack submarine designs for conventional power at this time. Hence, I recommend that these ships be nuclear powered and that the others be conventionally powered. Compared to the ships now in the Fleet, class for class, the ships in this authorization request are more survivable. Survivability in this sense is measured by the ability of each ship to defend itself as well as the ability to withstand hits when confronted with existing and projected threats.

Sincerely,

RONALD REAGAN.

## Authorization Requested for Combatant Ships

| | FY 1987 | FY 1988 |
|---|---|---|
| TRIDENT Class Nuclear Submarine | 1 | 1 |
| SSN-688 Class Nuclear Attack Submarine | 4 | 3 |
| CG-47 Class AEGIS Cruiser | 2 | 2 |
| DDG-51 Class Destroyer | 3 | 3 |
| LSD-41 Cargo Variant | - | 1 |
| LHD-1 Class Amphibious Assault Ship | - | 1 |

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